

WE VOLUNTEER

The Official Newsletter of the Wisconsin Emergency Volunteer Initiative

Volume 2
2009



Inside...

New Leadership for VOAD, Citizen Corps	2
New Safety Tools Available	3
Spotlight on Project Recovery	4
Creating a Ready Wisconsin	6
Private Sector Prepares	7
Brewers Get Prepared	8

About WeVolunteer

WeVolunteer is a partnership between the Wisconsin Citizen Corps Council and the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) to help local officials identify, develop and integrate volunteer resources into emergency response plans.

The initiative coordinates volunteer training and will soon host an emergency volunteer registry. For more information on the WeVolunteer Initiative, visit www.WeVolunteer.wi.gov.

Silver Lining to Recent Weather Emergencies

Opportunities to Educate Never Been Better

As the snow falls this winter, we all are wondering what the annual spring melt and summer rains will bring. Last year, Lake Delton drained and traffic on I-94 stood still. Could more record emergencies be on the way?

But we shouldn't get ahead of ourselves. The unpredictable winter months still pose a risk to the safety of our communities and citizens. Already this year, large snowstorms have pummeled the state, closing highways and leaving abandoned cars in their wake.

There is a silver lining to the challenges that Mother Nature has thrown our way, however; citizens and communities understand like never before the need for personal and family preparedness. With the public intently focused on our record-breaking weather events, we in the emergency response and volunteer communities have a great opportunity

to educate our fellow citizens on what steps they can take to protect themselves and their families.

As winter blizzards turn to swollen rivers this spring and we prepare our agencies for the likely emergencies, we encourage you to help your communities do the same. Speak at community events or meetings about the need for family preparedness plans, work with local businesses to sell pre-packaged emergency kits, or distribute information on where citizens can find help or volunteer during a disaster.

After a year of taxing and dangerous weather, we know more than ever the need for prepared communities; thankfully our citizens are listening like never before.

Thank you for your service and we wish you all the best,

Al Wilkening and Terri Leece
WeVolunteer Co-Chairs

VOAD Elects New Chairman

Keith Lang, Coordinator of Disaster Human Services for Luther Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, was elected to serve as Chairman of the Wisconsin Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). Keith has extensive experience with emergency volunteerism, including his months-long work with Project Recovery to overcome the disastrous effects of last June's floods.



You can learn more about Keith and his vision for the Wisconsin VOAD and WeVolunteer Initiative by reading his interview with WeVolunteer on www.WeVolunteer.wi.gov.

Citizen Corps Council Chairman Wilkening Resigns

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Governor Jim Doyle for appointing me to the Wisconsin Citizen Corps Council and to express my regret in resigning as Chairman. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to have served with such a team of dedicated professionals committed to ensuring the safety and security of our most precious asset, the citizens of Wisconsin.



During my tenure as Chair, I have witnessed the development of new and better ways to prepare our citizens, including a new communications program and the innovative WeVolunteer partnership. Together these achievements have and will continue to improve the safety of people and communities throughout the state.

I am particularly impressed with our volunteer organizations across the Great Badger State and how they 'move out' in a moment's notice to help fellow citizens. The thousands of emergency response professionals and volunteers in Wisconsin deserve our respect and thanks for their continued dedication and excellence.

While I must depart the Council at this time, I am excited for the many opportunities ahead. As I move on to my next career endeavors, I leave with great respect and admiration for those special people who are engaged in the challenging first responder business and for those volunteers who support their efforts. Congratulations to each and every one of you for a job very well done.

Albert H. Wilkening

Major General (retired) Al Wilkening



Safety Messages Available New Tools For You

Have you been looking to increase the preparedness of your community but don't know where to start? Do you need help advertising an upcoming training? Would you like to recruit emergency volunteers but don't have the resources? WeVolunteer has new tools to help you!

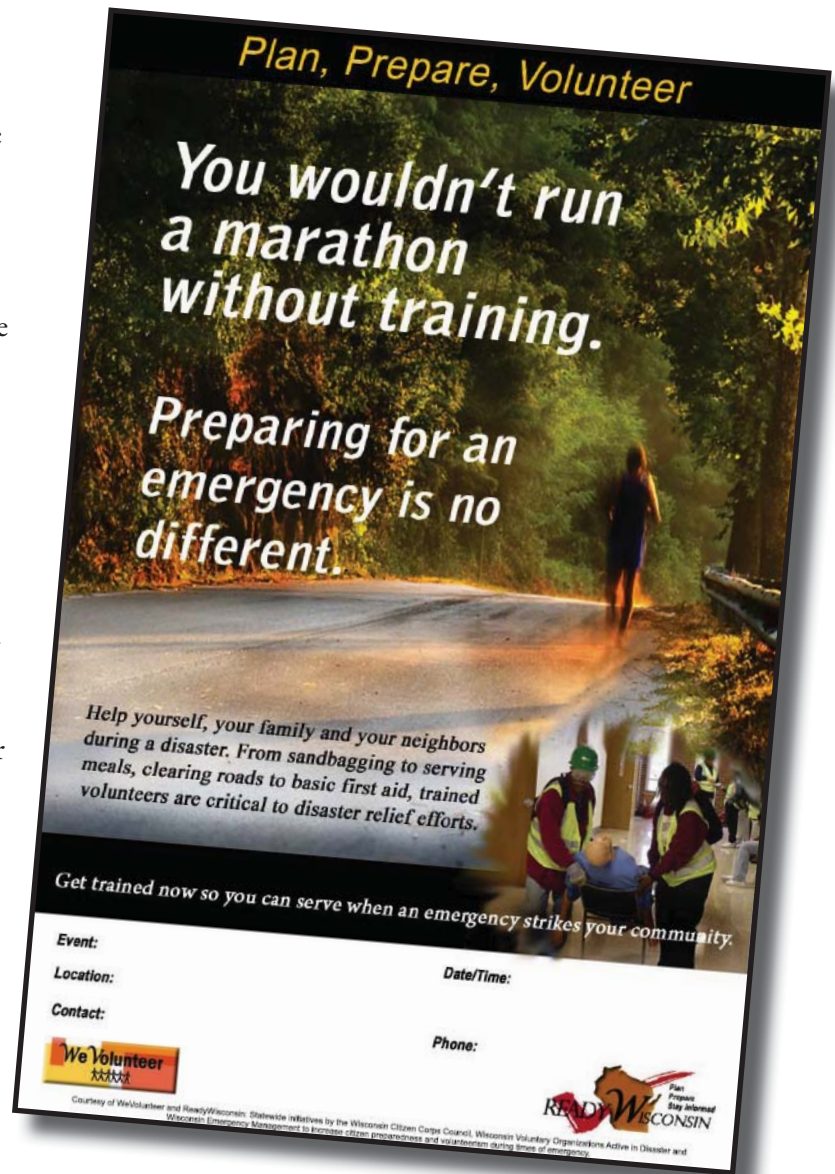
In partnership with Wisconsin Emergency Management and the new ReadyWisconsin Initiative (see page 6), WeVolunteer is producing high-quality and customizable posters and resources to promote preparedness and emergency volunteerism.

Print materials share a universal preparedness message and can be customized to include agency branding and local contact information. The campaign is intended to assist emergency response agencies like police, sheriff and emergency management offices and non-profit voluntary organizations that may not have the time or technology to produce preparedness messages. Posters are available online at www.WeVolunteer.wi.gov/resources to be downloaded and printed by local agencies.

"We heard from emergency responders and volunteer centers that they wanted to spread preparedness messages but couldn't - they were busy fighting fires and managing crises, events that really illustrate the need for citizen preparedness," said Ryan Sugden, public information officer for the WeVolunteer Initiative. "We hope that these resources will help communities become more prepared and emergency volunteerism will increase."

Posters with tips for severe weather safety and upcoming training courses will change seasonally. If you have any recommendations for future public service announcements or advertisements, please e-mail OJAWeVolunteer@wi.gov or call 608-266-3323 to suggest future topics.

To find more resources, including posters encouraging flood and severe weather safety this spring, visit www.WeVolunteer.wi.gov/Resources.



Ready-made public service announcements and print advertisements like this poster are being produced to help spread preparedness and volunteer messages. Logos and local contact information can be added to customize the posters for your agency and community.



Neighborhood Watch

Spotlight on *Project Recovery*

In June, record rainfalls swamped southern Wisconsin, washing out roads and flooding homes. The aftermath of the storms is still being felt. One organization, Project Recovery, is working with victims of the storms to overcome the trauma associated with natural disasters. Their work is this month's subject of the WeVolunteer Spotlight series.

Anyone present for the June floods in Wisconsin can bear witness to the power of water. Property damage, washed out roads and culverts, crop damage and other signs of destruction took an immediate and evident toll. Many individuals continue to struggle with the process of rebuilding after such devastating losses.

A less obvious result of a disaster of this magnitude is the ongoing emotional upheaval present in individuals, families and communities. Emotional responses are frequently felt by survivors of disasters and can make the disaster a very real presence, persisting long after the waters have receded.

The stress and strain of recovery from a disaster is sometimes known as the "disaster after the disaster." Frustration, disappointment and endless hours of strategizing and reconstruction can have a very detrimental effect on one's spirit. Examples of common emotional responses to disasters include:

- Irritability/Anger
- Anxiety/Worry
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Inability to sleep
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Nightmares
- Substance abuse

Project Recovery is an outreach program established to serve residents in the thirty Wisconsin counties included in the disaster declaration. The goal is to address the emotional needs of flood survivors and the communities in which they reside. Trained community members reach out to help people better understand their current situation as well as identify and address any physical or emotion reactions associated with the flooding. Project Recovery outreach workers are available to assist residents to review possible recovery options, provide emotional support and encourage linkage with other resources and organizations.

Continued on Page 5

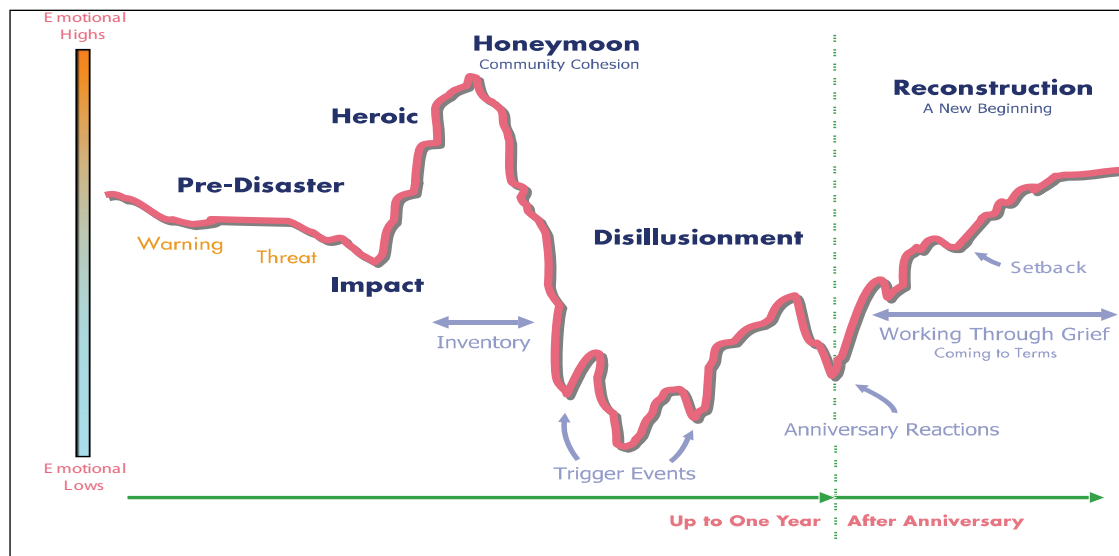


Last summer's storms flooded 40,000 homes and washed out dozens of roads, including this stretch of Highway 33. Damage estimates have reached nearly \$1.2 billion, though the emotion toll is impossible to measure.



Representatives from the project are also available to speak to churches, civic organizations, school personnel and other groups about the long-term recovery process. These presentations address the different phases that individuals, families and communities go through in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Having an understanding of this process allows community members to continue to assist and encourage one another. The following graph illustrates the recognized phases and timelines associated with disaster response and recovery:

The Wisconsin Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) continues to assist county emergency management agencies and volunteers in the impacted areas to assist them to develop local long-term recovery committees. VOAD member agencies include the Salvation Army, American Red Cross, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Charities and many other organizations with the mission of assisting individuals impacted by a disaster.



Victims of natural disasters struggle through a myriad of emotions - fear, disillusionment and anger, among others - for more than a year after the event. Project recovery helps individuals cope and organizations understand how to better serve their members through the recovery process.

While the cycle of recovery is somewhat predictable, each individual and community experiences the recovery process at its own pace. Project Recovery staff are available to serve as guides through that individualized recovery process.

Project Recovery is made possible through a partnership among the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Wisconsin Emergency Management, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Lutheran Social Services of WI & Upper MI Inc. and the Wisconsin Farm Center. Lutheran Social Services is the host agency for Project Recovery. More information on the initiative can be found by visiting the LSS website, www.lsswis.org, or contacting Keith Lang at 608 834-4444.

Through VOAD participation, these agencies are able to coordinate their resources to assist in long-term recovery efforts. This includes coordination and management of financial donations as well as case management services designed to assist residents to address their unmet needs after they have filed insurance claims and worked with FEMA to obtain federal individual assistance.

VOAD organizations and Project Recovery are dedicated to working with county emergency management organizations in advance of significant storms. To establish a long-term recovery committee, contact your local VOAD or Terri Leece, VOAD Long-Term Recovery Chair, at 715-572-4147.





Creating a Ready Wisconsin

Families, communities and emergency service agencies will soon have more tools than ever to prepare for disasters and emergencies. In February, Wisconsin Emergency Management will launch Ready Wisconsin, an initiative to educate citizens and provide resources for voluntary and emergency response agencies to increase preparedness in their communities.

From an integrated website and models of personal preparedness plans to free radio public service announcements for local markets, Ready Wisconsin will provide a host of resources for individuals and communities. Ready Wisconsin will survey best practices from across the nation and will provide tips on how to build an emergency preparedness kit, make a safety plan and stay informed of approaching emergencies. Ready Wisconsin will work in coordination with WeVolunteer to help citizens get involved in their local communities.

“I am honored and thrilled to help citizens and communities in Wisconsin become safer and more prepared for emergencies,” said Susan Burleigh, Wisconsin’s Citizen Preparedness Coordinator. “I have heard from emergency responders, volunteer organizations and citizens across the state that providing meaningful, turn-key preparedness tools and resources will go a long way towards improving citizen and community preparedness – and Ready Wisconsin aims to do that.”

Ready Wisconsin will launch a new website, www.ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov, and begin rolling out other resources in February. For more information, contact Susan Burleigh at Susan.Burleigh@wisconsin.gov.



Spring Training

CERT Training Taking a Regional Approach

Regional networks of Community Emergency Response Training (CERT)-trained volunteers will soon be available to respond to all varieties of hazards thanks to a partnership with the Wisconsin Citizen Corps Council and the Wisconsin Technical College System. Two-hundred CERT volunteers will be trained at the Fox Valley Technical College and sixty more at the Madison Area Technical College. A database of the trained volunteers will be kept and used to deploy crucial human resources when disaster strikes.

Taking a regional approach makes sense. There is a greater level of coordination among deployed volunteers if they have trained together. Hosting courses at regional technical colleges also leverages the education experience of the faculty and reduces the burden on county emergency managers to conduct CERT training.

The federally-certified CERT curriculum is a widely-recognized and effective method to train citizens to

prepare themselves and serve others during disasters. A trained citizen will have advanced knowledge of fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations.

The courses are funded by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance and free to trainees.

Courses are scheduled in Shawano and Oshkosh in March; future courses will be advertised locally and on www.WeVolunteer.wi.gov. If you or your organization is interested in receiving CERT training, contact your local technical college or Dave Duecker, the Wisconsin Citizen Corps Council program manager, at **David.Duecker@wisconsin.gov**.



La Crosse is Open For Business: Private Sector Disaster Readiness Training

To better help local business owners avoid disaster-related catastrophe, the La Crosse County Emergency Management and Health Department offices are co-sponsoring 2-hour training seminars dedicated to improving private sector disaster preparedness.

Using Open for Business®, a toolkit developed by the Institute for Business & Home Safety, staff will help business owners prepare for interruptions in business operations and to develop plans for employee safety and business continuity in the event of natural disasters.

Seminars will be held on March 24 in Onalaska and April 7 in West Salem. Visit www.WeVolunteer.wi.gov/training for registration information.

Looking for a training course in your community? Would you like to advertise an upcoming event? Visit WeVolunteer.wi.gov and check our training page for more information. Or contact us at OJAWeVolunteer@wi.gov to add your course to the website!



**Mennonite
Disaster
Service**

PREPAREDNESS

Preparedness Month a Success

Brewers, Communities Join Effort to Prepare Citizens

The Milwaukee Brewers weren't the only team preparing for an important season last year. Communities across the state participated in a record number of September Preparedness Month events in anticipation of active winter and spring storm seasons. The Milwaukee Brewers, Green Bay Packers and Radio Disney joined state and local governments to host events and broadcast public service announcements on how to prepare for storms and disasters. Events were hosted in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington and La Crosse Counties, among others, and Radio Disney broadcast public service announcements throughout southeastern Wisconsin. Past and future Preparedness Month information can be found on www.ReadyWisconsin.wi.gov.



The Milwaukee Brewers racing sausages helped spread the preparedness message before a September baseball game.

Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance

1 S. Pinckney St., Suite 600
Madison, WI 53702